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Cartoheritage and digital presentation in a GLAM-organization.

Keywords: Cartoheritage, cartodiversity, GLAM, Geoplaza, map and geoinformation curatorship

Currently a programme is being developed around Art, Heritage and Archives, which aims for a better position of the Heritage collections within the VU University. These collections are included in the University Library. From that point of view, the University Library is truly a GLAM-organisation. One of the aims is to strengthen the relations between the various collections. This will be demonstrated in the way materials are made available, exhibited and in other ways.

This article describes the position of the Map Collection as the special collection of the library that includes cartoheritage, focussing on the one hand on the relationship between cartoheritage and the digital supply in the Image database and on the other hand on the relation between the physical collection and the digital supply on Geoplaza, the VU-portal for GIS and Geodata with all their cartodiverse aspects.

Cartoheritage and digital presentation in a GLAM-organization.

From Faculty collection to Heritage collection

When you have worked in one and the same map collection for long enough, you get a good impression of how the special collections are appreciated in the institution you are working for, in my case the VU University Library. The VU is a campus university with a centralized library with two locations on the campus. Since the establishment of the Geographical Institute in a townhouse in Amsterdam, with prof. dr M.W. Heslinga as its director, a Map Collection and a map curator were needed. The first map curator started in 1967. During that decade, the main users were geographers. From the 1970s the Map Collection was housed in the Main Building of the University at the outskirts of the city. In the course of time, all the faculties were united on the campus, which resulted in an increased use of the Map Collection, not only by geographers, but also historians, earth scientists, archeologists, art historians etc.

After the subfaculty Social Geography and Environmental Sciences was closed in 1985, visitors continued to come, but an organizational change was imminent. From 1987 onwards the Map Collection was no longer part of the Gamma-library, but part of a newly created Special Collections division. These collections shared their interdisciplinary character and their special material features. In 1994 the main department of the Special Collections was housed on one floor of the library. The sections of maps, bibliographies, old books and manuscripts and press documentation were encouraged to cooperate and to be more visible to the public.



Figure 1: VU Map Collection till 1994.

Digitization and changing management ideas led to a new constellation within these collections. From 2006 onwards the special collections, under the new name *Bijzondere Collecties* (in English also *Special Collections*) comprising the collections old prints and manuscripts and the map collection, became one department with one head curator. The Historical Documentation Centre for Dutch Protestantism already had close relations with the department of old prints, and for that reason was also added. Another newcomer in this constellation became the so-called *Exposorium*. The curator of the Exposorium was responsible for organizing art exhibitions and for curating the art collection of the VU. During that period the map collection was focusing on new ways of presenting the collection and developing a new platform for georeferenced material and geodata within the context of a project called ‘On the digital map’, which has led to Geoplaza: a portal for all matters related to GIS and geodata.



Figure 2: VU Map Collection till 2011, scan controlling of a map 8 meters in length: travelling map of Japan from about 1850.

However, in 2011, the map collection was detached from the Special Collections, organizationally and physically, and had to be housed among the other collections of the library. Expectations were that this would create a stronger link with education and research. A period of organizational and personnel change followed.

A reorganization of the library in 2014 led to a new situation and a new vision concerning the special collections. Since 2014 the VU Library is officially responsible for curating and making available the Historical - static - Archives of the VU and the Protestant Archive Collections (these are the archives collected by the Historical Documentation Centre for Dutch Protestantism (HDC)). The scientific department of the HDC is part of the faculty of Humanities. In 2015 the art collection - after a period of unsure status - and the academic heritage objects were added. These recent developments are based on the idea that the library acts as the University's contentmanager, an idea that was formulated in a policy plan entitled 'Hotspot for content' for the period 2014-2016. This opened the way to a broader scope of content types than in the past. The present director of the University Library plays an important role in creating awareness of heritage collections in the VU. One of the aims laid out in a long-term policy plan with a perspective until the year 2020, is that all the cultural and scientific heritage collections of the VU are curated in an adequate way, and that where possible active use of these collections for presentations, education and research is made. To reach these goals a programme was started up at the beginning of this year called 'Art, Heritage and Archives: special material collections in order' (in Dutch: *KEA*). Just for the archives, the academic heritage objects and the unlocking software, the VU has allocated more than €1.7 million. The main objective of this project is to inventorise the collections and make plans for retrieval, conservation, digitization, storage etc. based on a common plan. Let's take a closer look at these collections.

1. Manuscripts and old prints.

These include written and printed books published before 1900. Important collections are related to Protestantism with for instance the second biggest collection of books of and about John Bunyan.



Figure 3: Still life of bibles from the 'Sunday silver collection' Bernard van Noordwijk.

2. Protestant archive collections.

These collections with archives of Protestant institutions and persons from 1800 to the present day, have been collected by the Historical Documentation Centre for Dutch Protestantism, established in 1971.

An important archive is that of Abraham Kuyper, which comprises approximately 9000 letters. He was a theologian and one of the founding fathers of the Vrije Universiteit. *Vrij=Free* refers to a university free from state and church founded on Protestant principles. Kuyper was also its first principal in 1880.



Figure 4: Marble bust of Abraham Kuyper. Toon Dupuis, 1905, Collection HDC, University Library of the Vrije Universiteit.

Apart from that he was a statesman and elected Prime Minister of the Netherlands in 1901. He was a driven person, eager to travel and discover the world. A detailed report of his travels around the Mediterranean and his meetings with people with other cultural and religious backgrounds has been described in his book: *Om de oude wereldzee (Around the old world sea)*: two volumes with more than 1000 pages. The director of the HDC George Harinck travelled in Abraham Kuyper's footsteps, and this tour was broadcast as a successful tv-series in 2015. Harinck also travelled in Kuyper's footsteps in a tour of America. The results of this trip will be shown on Dutch television this spring.

3. VU-archives.

This is a static archive of historical value. Budget has been reserved for a period of 4 years for making a complete inventory. To facilitate future archiving, this project will be connected to today's records management at the university.

4. Academic heritage objects.

These objects are spread over the campus. The objects can vary from furniture, geological stones and scientific instruments to inventions such as the clap skate developed by kinesiologists at the VU.



Figure 5: Clap skate, spectacular invention by VU-kinesiologists.

5. Art-collection.

The art collection, built up in the sixties of the last century, comprises a variety of media from paintings, including academic portraits, and photography to a small collection of glass objects and ceramics. The art collection is meant to inspire and provoke the VU community. Contemporary art by engaged artists is exhibited and aims to enter into a relationship with scientific subjects that play a role in the VU. A recent example is an exhibition with photographs of twins, titled *Double Dutch*. The Dutch Twin Register, founded in 1987 by VU-psychologist Dorret Boomsma is world famous. Occasionally, exhibited artworks are acquired for the VU collection.



Figure 6: Two portraits in the exhibition *Double Dutch*.

6. Maps and atlases.

Last but not least: in the context of this project the map collection, as a special collection, will get the opportunity to define its heritage and hopefully improve the conservation and the availability of maps that require access by means of all possible available techniques.



Figure 7: Poster of the Map Collection, a collection with 5.500 atlases, 5.100 books and 60.000 maps of which 4000 maps in the Image database.

Five project managers have been appointed for the six projects described above. As project manager for the map collection I have seized the opportunity to share these hopefully beneficial developments with you.

Finally, I must mention the *Bilderdijkmuseum*. Willem Bilderdijk (1756-1831) was a historian and poet and has been called the father of the Réveil, a Christian revival movement from 1826 onwards. The collection of the Society of the Bilderdijkmuseum has been housed in the VU since 1931, but is not easily accessible at the moment. The books written by and about Bilderdijk have been catalogued by the VU Library.

In summary, it can be concluded that nowadays the VU university is aware of the cultural and scientific value of its heritage collections. In the context of the ‘Art, Heritage and Archive’ project (KEA) the special collections of the VU have been brought together under the responsibility of the Universi-

ty Library. Considering the various materials held in these collections, the VU Library has to manage a broad range of aspects particular to GLAM-collections.

Nevertheless, in an overview of activities, abstracted from the yearplan 2016, the emphasis is placed on connections and common approach. The library as curator wants to promote the use of all the physical materials of the heritage collections by: digitization, more integration or cooperation across different materials and updating collection plans (deselection included). Interesting in this context is the programme of the forthcoming network meeting from 9-11 June of the European Academic Heritage Network, UNIVERSEUM, organized by the University of Amsterdam and Utrecht University where the questions under discussion are: How can library, archival and museum collections within a university be connected and what are the benefits of (re)connecting them? And: how can you increase use of collections across different disciplines for education, research, representation and display? These are questions that currently have our attention too. But let's first answer the question: how does the VU offer cartographic materials?

Cartodiversity: from having to sharing

On the website of the Map Collection, <http://www.ub.vu.nl/en/collections/map-collection/index.aspx>, you can get an overview of the analogue and digital supply of cartographic materials. Although the library focusses on digital supply, in my opinion it is important to stress the relationship between the analogue, mainly paper holdings, and the digital supply, and not regard them as separate worlds. The main reason for this is that these components are supplementary to each other. Indeed, it can be stated that there is a decreasing connection to the physical map collection when one respectively compares the maps in the Image database and the datasets on Geoplaza.

The maps in the Image database are based on the maps in the collection that were published before 1900 and the first years of the 20th century. However, accompanying information, such as street indexes or other supplements have been digitized to some extent, so you can't always see the complete document in the Image database. Choices made during the process of digitization can lead to loss of information in the visual presentation. Therefore, recording this kind of information in the metadata is important to get an idea of the complete document. You probably already know how Google digitized books containing maps, leaving the maps folded and therefore useless for map research.

In the case of Geoplaza the situation is different. The relation between datasets on Geoplaza and the VU paper map collection can vary from a strong relation to no relation. It's helpful to be aware of the original sources and as far as the sources are part of the VU collection, to realize how they correspond, differ and complement the digital supply. Good presentation and metadating can help users correctly list sources.

To illustrate this, I will give you some examples.

1. Globe: Globe céleste, published between 1882 and 1890.

The digitizing firm has found a way to digitize this 3-dimensional cartographic object. The result is that you get a good impression of the total globe, but it's also possible to zoom in on any section.

<http://imagebase.ubvu.vu.nl/cdm/compoundobject/collection/krt/id/3790/rec/1>

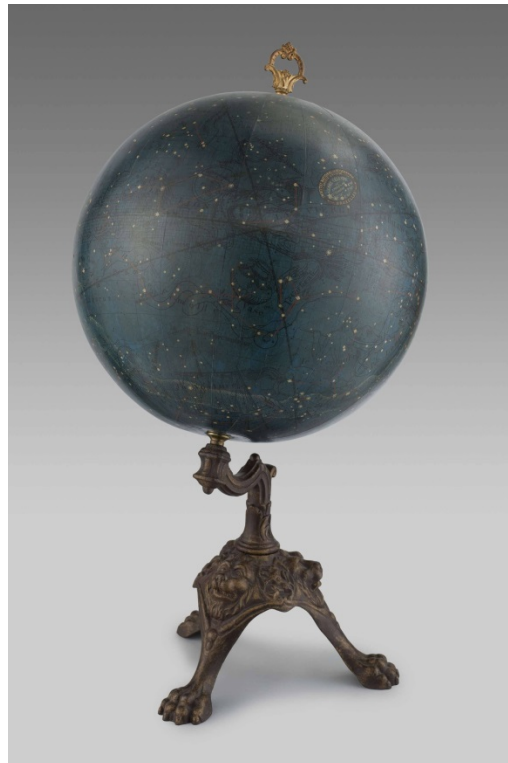


Figure 8: Globe céleste: celestial globe, published in Brussels by the *Institut national de Géographie* between 1882 and 1890.

2. Map with Index: *Carte générale des provinces européennes et asiatique de l'Empire Ottoman*, 1892 and *Carte de la boucle du Niger*, 1897.

In this case we digitized the complete 40-page index, but sometimes the additional information to the map is so extensive that a decision is made not to digitize it. If you need information contained in the Index, you need to borrow the original document from the library. If all is well, the metadata show that there is an additional index. In the case of the second map we decided not to digitize the 76-page index.

<http://imagebase.ubvu.vu.nl/cdm/compoundobject/collection/krt/id/4825/rec/2>

<http://imagebase.ubvu.vu.nl/cdm/singleitem/collection/krt/id/4918/rec/1>



Figure 9: *Carte générale des provinces européennes et asiatiques de l'Empire Ottoman sans l'Arabie* / dressée par Henri Kiepert. Berlin, 1892.

3. Recto and verso: *Post- und Eisenbahn-Karte von Deutschland, den Niederlanden, Belgien und der Schweiz*, [1859].

In the case of this map, we also had to make a choice. If relevant information is on the verso, we digitize the verso. If there is minimal information or hand-written information, one can argue for or against digitization. We have opted for a generous policy, so that the verso of quite a number of maps have been digitized. In the case of this map, we recently received a request from the Municipal Museum in The Hague. They were delighted about a small map on the verso and wanted to use it in the catalogue of the - now running - exhibition about the Polish artist Wojciech Weiss (1875-1950).

<http://imagebase.ubvu.vu.nl/cdm/compoundobject/collection/krt/id/694/rec/3>

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Figure 10: *Post- und Eisenbahn-Karte von Deutschland, den Niederlanden, Belgien und der Schweiz*. Gotha, [1859].
Recto and verso.

4. Factice-atlas [1705 or later], *Tabula exactissima Regnorum Sueciae et Norvegiae...* [ca. 1630]. We have digitized a factice atlas containing 216 maps, but the atlas has no title page. So, in the Image database you'll find 216 images of the maps, but nowhere an image of the atlas as a whole, because the maps have been catalogued separately for the Dutch Union Catalogue, all with their own record. Only our local Catalogue shows a fake title of the complete atlas next to the separate map descriptions. To gain insight into how all the maps are arranged, you have to consult the atlas in the library.

<http://imagebase.uvu.vu.nl/cdm/singleitem/collection/krt/id/3110/rec/1>



Figure 11: *Tabula exactissima Regnorum Sueciae et Norvegiae...* by Nic. Visscher. Amsterdam, [ca 1630].

5. *Galérie agréable du monde* / Pieter van der Aa

The last volume of Koeman's *Atlantes Neerlandici* published in 2012 contains the description of the *Galérie agréable du monde*, composed by Pieter van der Aa in 1728. Especially for VU campus users, and with special permission from the publisher, all the 3715 images with maps and prints by Blaeu, Visscher, Allard etc. have been incorporated into the Image database. The images are based on the images on the DVD that accompanies the book, but do not correlate exactly with the maps in the collection. However, this is how we can offer easier access to 18th century material than just the facility to borrow a book with a DVD with no facilities for playing it in the library.

6. Map-series: Topographical and Military Map of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (*TMK*). Last year we finished an interesting project about the oldest topographical map of the Netherlands on the scale 1:50.000. The results can be seen in the Image database and on Geoplaza.
<http://imagebase.uvu.nl/cdm/compoundobject/collection/krt/id/6743/rec/1>
<http://geoplaza.vu.nl/data/dataset/topographische-en-militaire-kaart-van-het-koninkrijk-der-nederlanden>

The dataset on Geoplaza shows the following data and resources:

- Three Excel-files with all the paper maps of the *TMK* in the VU-collection (facsimiles included).
- Two links to the Image database with respectively the digitized maps of one hardbound set of *TMK* maps from the VU-collection and the digitized editions of the land registry (Kadaster), offered to us by DANS (Data Archiving and Networked Services), which promotes sustainable access to digital research data.
- A viewer with access to a georeferenced set, based on the hardbound set of the collection and another georeferenced set based on a set offered by DANS. By clicking on the red button with an *i* (identify features) you can query the characteristics of the related sheet including a link to the Image database.

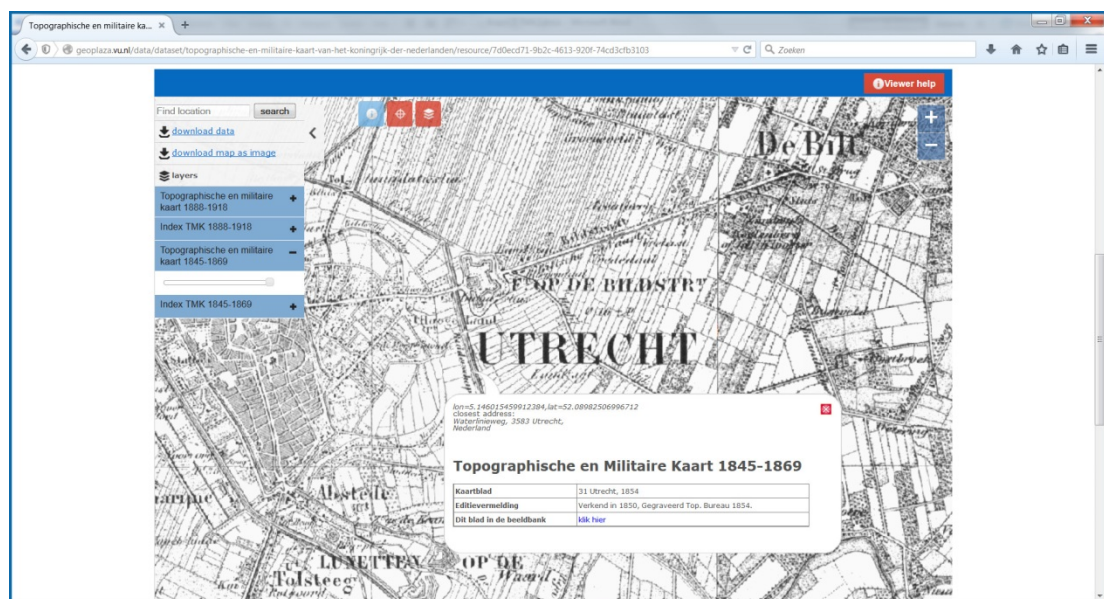


Figure 12: *TMK*, use of button to *Identify features*.

The *TMK* is a good example of integration of internal VU sources and external sources.

For Geoplaza as a whole we can discern:

- Datasets based on digitized maps of the VU-collection and a number of other organizations. Examples: *Natuurschoonwet Landgoederen*, a unique set of 304 digitized and vectorised maps from the

first half of the 20th century with the estates in manuscript on printed topographical maps on the scale 1:25.000; the *TMK* maps; *Oude Rivierkaarten Rijkswaterstaat 1830-1931 (Old Rivermaps)*.

b. Datasets based on VU research: *Railway stations and railway tracks*, *Kloosterkaart (Dutch Medieval monasteries)*.

c. Datasets from external organizations based on open data, such as *BAG (Basicregistrations Addresses and Buildings)*, *TOP10NL*, *Bioscopen in Nederland (Cinemas in the Netherlands)* and *GADM database of global administrative areas* or licensed data, such as *Bodemkaart van Nederland (Soil map)* and *GKN (Geomorphological Map of The Netherlands)*.

d. Links to external portals such as the *Rijkswaterstaat geoservices portal*.

As we are now starting up a project in cooperation with other universities to create a kind of national Geoplaza, the possibilities of sharing maps and geodata will grow.

Users: from demand to supply and vice-versa

As to the Image database with 4000 images accessible to everybody throughout the world, we have noticed an increase in use. In 2015 1042 maps were downloaded (total number of downloads complete Image database: 1140). In addition to the Netherlands, requests came from Germany, France, the United States and Japan for permission to download and publish. Requests came from researchers, institutions (museums, nature conservation organisations, broadcasting companies etc.) and individuals.

For example, VU maps and archival objects were used for a Dutch television series about the 19th century *De IJzeren Eeuw (The Iron Century)* last year.

The creation of Geoplaza started with a questionnaire among users of maps about their cartographic wishes for the future, and after the release, new applications were used for education and research. Map layers from Geoplaza, loaded on iPads were used during field-work for the project ‘Film in Rome’ and fieldwork in the Plakari area in Greece. The next step was more interactive. During archaeological fieldwork students had to add point characteristics to the map, using the ‘Collector’ app on their iPad and mobile internet. They could attach video, film and a blog to their research results. It might be useful to publish the end results on Geoplaza under *Projects*, so that easy sharing of information between students and teachers can be realized.

A new kind of request came from the Faculty of Humanities. One of the historians, prof dr. Koen Goudriaan, developed a website about monasteries in the Netherlands with a range of search possibilities, but without geographical visualization. To meet this wish we started a project to realise this on Geoplaza. Early this year the first release was presented under the title *Kloosterkaart: Nederlandse middeleeuwse kloosters in kaart gebracht (Dutch Medieval monasteries mapped)* for which 54 symbols were created for the different monastic orders. 700 monasteries were mapped. Work is currently underway on a diachronic version that includes a high number of benchmark years and the integration of the Monastery map in the monastery list website. The Heritage Centre for Dutch Monastic life is very interested in this project as it can lead to cooperation and exchange.

All these examples show that a special (heritage) collection has an important role to play in education and research on campus, but also has a social function. It is also an opportunity for the VU to present itself.

Practical results and view on the future

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2. **Library Lab:** an instruction room has been created where physical and digital material can be consulted. This enables students to learn in practice how original sources are related to digital supply.



Figure 15: Library Lab.

3. **Study room:** a separate and well-secured study room for special materials seems logical, but for the first time an integrated study room for all special materials has been realized. This room is situated next to the newly created Library Information Desk in the main building.
4. **Physical UB 2018:** special collections will reflect the VU identity, social profiling and social responsibility.



Figure 16: Physical UB 2018.

Heritage collections show a wide variety, but maps themselves show variety too. You can consider a map as an object of art, as an archive record, as a scientific object, as a visualization, as a dataset etc.; all terms to describe cartodiversity. In other words, quoting the definition of cartography formulated by the newly appointed ICA-chair Menno-Jan Kraak (Keppel 2015: 5): Cartography is the art, science and technology of making and using maps. And that’s how we are dealing with maps and geoinformation in the VU Library.

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